

A NEW GENUS AND SPECIES OF THE PENAEOID FAMILY  
SOLENOCERIDAE (CRUSTACEA, DECAPODA) FROM  
SOUTH-EAST AFRICAN WATERS

By

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(With 1 figure and 1 table)

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ABSTRACT

A new genus, *Cryptopenaeus*, is proposed for a new solenocerid species, *Cryptopenaeus catherinae*, which is described and illustrated. The new genus is related to *Hymenopenaeus* and *Haliporoides* formerly belonging to the genus *Hymenopenaeus*, *sensu lato*. *C. catherinae* has so far been found only in three localities off southern Mozambique at depths of 310–500 metres.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction . . . . .	123
<i>Cryptopenaeus</i> gen. nov. . . . .	123
<i>Cryptopenaeus catherinae</i> sp. nov. . . . .	125
Acknowledgements . . . . .	130
References . . . . .	130

INTRODUCTION

In June 1969, while collecting penaeoid shrimps aboard a trawler operating in deep water off southern Mozambique, one male specimen representing a new genus and species was caught in 350 metres of water. Further male specimens were subsequently found in the same area in June 1973, and the only female available was caught in September 1976 at a depth of 500 metres.

All specimens were caught together with the commercially important pink or knife prawn *Haliporoides triarthrus*, as well as the less common *Aristeomorpha foliacea* and *Penaeopsis balssi*.

Genus *Cryptopenaeus* gen. nov.

*Diagnosis*

Body robust; carapace elongate; integument firm. Rostrum short, not reaching distal margin of first antennular segment; ventral margin moderately convex; armed only with dorsal teeth; epigastric tooth and first rostral separated by interval equal to or only slightly greater than that between first and second rostral teeth. Orbital, suprahepatic and branchiostegal spines absent; antennal, postorbital, hepatic and pterygostomial spines present; cervical sulcus deep, long but not reaching mid-dorsum of carapace; hepatic sulcus deep and long, bending anteroventrally from horizontal posterior part and almost reaching

base of pterygostomian spine; orbito-antennal groove shallow and wide; branchiocardiac carina distinct but not sharp; mid-dorsal abdominal carina present on segments two to six. Telson with pair of short fixed spines; no movable marginal spines. Prosartema narrow, long, extending beyond end of eye. Antennular flagella similar, subcylindrical and equal to, or slightly longer than, carapace. Mandibular palp two jointed; articles subequal in length, distal one narrower than basal and tapering to rounded apex. Exopodites on all maxillipeds and pereopods. Lateral ramus of uropod with very small, blunt distolateral spine. Petasma with ventrolateral lobule entirely occupied by ventral costa and distally free from dorsolateral lobule; both ventrolateral and dorsolateral lobules heavily sclerotized; appendix masculina and appendix interna present. Thelycum simple, of open type. Podobranch on maxilliped II only; epipodites on maxillipeds II and III and on pereopods I–IV.

#### *Type species*

*Cryptopenaeus catherinae* sp. nov.

#### *Etymology*

The generic name is derived from the prefix *crypto*, from the Greek *kryptos* meaning hidden, in combination with the generic name *Penaeus*, denoting the fact that this shrimp has been hidden from science until now; gender masculine.

#### *Taxonomic status and comments*

From the works of Bate (1881, 1888), Bouvier (1906), and Burkenroad (1936), it is clear that the generic complex forming the then accepted subfamily Solenocerinae presented many taxonomic difficulties. This subfamily consisted of three genera: *Solenocera*, shrimps with concave antennular flagella (Lucas 1849; Wood-Mason & Alcock 1891; Barnard 1950); *Haliporus*, shrimps with subcylindrical antennular flagella and movable lateral spines on the telson anterior to fixed pair (Bate 1881; Kensley 1968); and *Hymenopenaeus*, shrimps with subcylindrical antennular flagella and lacking lateral spines on the telson (Smith 1882; Wood-Mason & Alcock 1891; Barnard 1950).

It is apparent from the literature, however, that Burkenroad (1936) was somewhat unhappy with the taxonomic status of *Hymenopenaeus* and went to the point of dividing the genus into four superspecies ‘. . . according to the presence or absence of branchiostegal or pterygostomian spines and to the nature of the postrostral armature’. Pérez Farfante (1977) revised the subfamily and, besides proposing that the subfamilies hitherto accepted should be elevated to the category of families of the superfamily Penaeoidea, divided *Hymenopenaeus* into five genera partly based on the superspecific groups elaborated by Burkenroad (1936). In doing so Pérez Farfante takes into consideration the ‘. . . shape of the antennular flagella and rostrum, proportions of the carapace, number and comparative size of the articles of the mandibular palp, presence or absence of certain carinae on the carapace, relative dimensions of the posterior

two pairs of pereopods, location of the distolateral spine of the lateral ramus of the uropod, structure of the petasma and degree of development of the arthrobranchia on somite VII', as well as those characteristics originally used by Burkenroad.

The system presented is very comprehensive and covers the previously known species extremely well. However, whereas the six specimens caught in southern Mozambique belong clearly to the family Solenoceridae and would have fitted into the genus *Hymenopenaeus sensu lato*, they do not belong to any of the five genera established by Pérez Farfante (1977), and have therefore been placed in a new genus, *Cryptopenaeus*.

Table 1 sets out the similarities and differences between *Cryptopenaeus* and the other five genera, *Hymenopenaeus*, *Haliporoides*, *Pleoticus*, *Hadropenaeus*, and *Mesopenaeus*. The new genus is closely allied to *Hymenopenaeus* and *Haliporoides* but differs from the former in the arrangement of the rostral teeth, the absence of branchiostegal spines, the presence of a mid-dorsal carina on abdominal segments 2 and 3 and also by the short rostrum with a strongly convex ventral margin. *Cryptopenaeus* differs from *Haliporoides* in the arrangement of the rostral teeth, presence of a dorsal carina on the second abdominal segment, by the absence of a suprahepatic spine and by the short rostrum with a strongly convex ventral margin. The petasma of *Cryptopenaeus* differs from that of the other five genera in having the ventrolateral lobule entirely occupied by the ventral costa.

*Cryptopenaeus catherinae* sp. nov.

Fig. 1

*Material*

Holotype: SAM-A16148 in the South African Museum, Cape Town, ♂, 46,7 mm carapace length, caught off Cape Santa Maria in southern Mozambique (26°06'S 33°08'E) at a depth of 350 metres, on 16 December 1969.

Alloptype: SAM-A16149 in the South African Museum, Cape Town, ♀, 63,2 mm carapace length, caught off Monte Bello in southern Mozambique (25°00'S 35°21'E) at a depth of 500 metres, in September 1976.

Paratypes: 4 ♂♂, 44,5–47,7 mm carapace length, caught off southern Mozambique at a depth of 310 metres, in June 1973. One male paratype is in the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., and the remaining three will be sent to the British Museum (Natural History).

*Description*

*Rostrum.* Slightly downwardly directed, reaching to or just beyond end of first antennular segment; ventral margin convex; rostral teeth  $\frac{7-8}{0}$ ; epigastric and three other teeth situated behind postorbital margin of carapace; adrostral carina short, just reaching postorbital margin; postrostral carina very well developed, long, almost reaching posterior margin of carapace and with conspicuous notch behind epigastric tooth; median groove absent.

TABLE 1  
 Characteristics distinguishing *Cryptopenaeus* gen. nov. from the five closely related genera

	<i>Hymenopenaeus</i>	<i>Haliporoides</i>	<i>Pleoticus</i>	<i>Hadropenaeus</i>	<i>Mesopenaeus</i>	<i>Cryptopenaeus</i>
Epigastric and rostral teeth ..	Epigastric and 1st rostral teeth separated from 2nd	Epigastric separated from 1st rostral tooth	Separated by regularly decreasing intervals	Separated by regularly decreasing intervals	Separated by regularly decreasing intervals	Separated by regularly decreasing intervals
Abdominal dorsal carina ..	4-6	3-6	1-6 or 3-6	3-6	3-6	2-6
Branchiostegal spine ..	Present	Absent	Present or absent	Present	Absent	Absent
Pterygostomian spine ..	Present or absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present
Orbital spine ..	Absent	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Absent
Suprahepatic spine ..	Absent	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
Branchiocardiac carina ..	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Absent	Present
Submarginal carina ..	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Absent	Present
Ventral margin of rostrum ..	Straight	Long, straight to concave	Straight to concave	Strongly convex	Strongly convex	Short and convex



*Carapace.* Uniformly glabrous and lightly punctate; gastrofrontal and postocular grooves and horizontal suture absent; no supra-orbital spine; cervical sulcus and carina very well developed and long but not reaching dorsal midline; cervical carina terminating anteroventrally in prominent hepatic spine; gastro-orbital carina absent; postorbital spine prominent; antennal spine present but relatively small; antennal carina absent; orbito-antennal groove restricted to wide depression extending from below postorbital spine to below hepatic spine; hepatic carina sharp, anteroventrally directed and situated just anterior and below hepatic spine; hepatic sulcus wide and deep; extending posteriorly below hepatic spine; branchiocardiac carina distinct but not very sharp. Branchiostegal spine absent; pterygostomian spine prominent and sharp; submarginal carina long and sharp; no vertical suture or carina.

*Antennule.* Flagella subequal in length; about 2,5 times length of antennular peduncle; subcylindrical; mesial flagella twice as thick as lateral flagella; prosartema flexible with pointed apex, reaching just beyond distal end of first antennular peduncle, copiously provided with long setae; stylocerite sharply pointed distally, straight and reaching just beyond end of eye or to end of first antennular article; distolateral spine prominent and long; parapenaeid spine absent.

*Scaphocerite.* Distolateral spine reaching just beyond distal end of antennular peduncle; apex of lamella extending beyond distolateral spine; basicerite with single broad blunt tooth distally.

*Mandibular palp.* Reaching to about basal one-third of carpal segment; proximal article 1,8 times as long as wide; distal article subequal to proximal, tapering to rounded apex.

*Maxilliped III.* Endopodite not exhibiting sexual dimorphism; reaching distal end of scaphocerite; exopodite short, reaching less than half-way along merus of endopodites; epipodite present.

*Pereiopods.* Exopodites present on all pereopods, well developed, longest on first pereopod and shortest on fifth; epipodites present on pereopods I–IV; basipodites of first, second and third with prominent spines; ischial spine present on first pereopod only; distinct coxal spine on fifth pereopod. Pereopod IV reaching to apex of mandibular palp; pereopod V reaching to distal end of antennular peduncle. Extended laterally lengths of pereopods in ascending order are: first, second and fourth, third and fifth.

*Abdomen.* Uniformly glabrous; mid-dorsal carina present from posterior half of second segment to end of sixth where it terminates in short spine; short vertical groove on pleura of first segment; lateral carinae absent.

*Telson.* Slightly longer than sixth segment; about as long as mesial ramus of uropod; median groove deep, occupying only anterior half of telson; apical spine somewhat blunt; pair of inconspicuous, very short, fixed subapical spines present; movable marginal spines lacking.

*Thelycum.* Simple open structure; anterior portion formed by vertical posterior face of sternite between fourth pereopods; posterior face with short

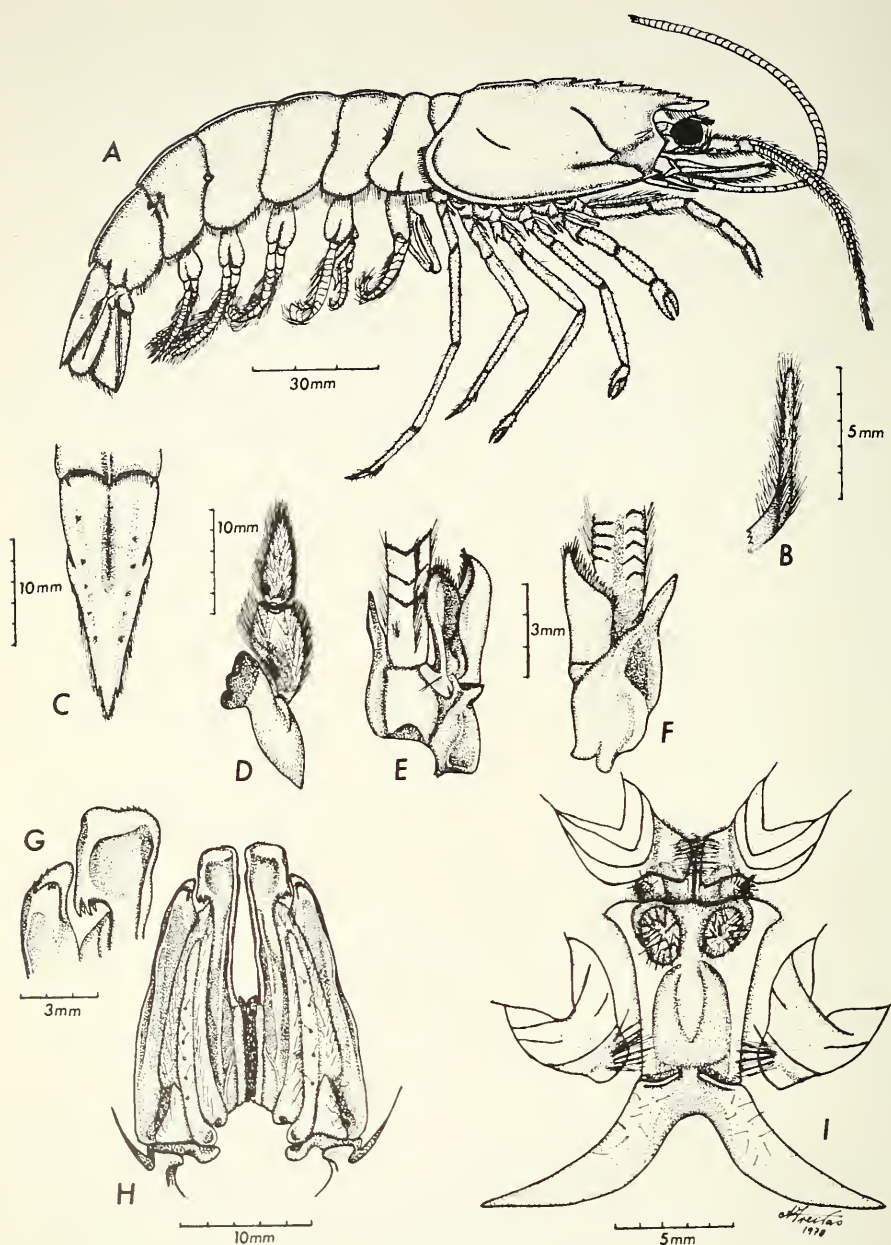


Fig. 1. *Cryptopenaeus catherinae* sp. nov. A. Lateral view, holotype ♂ 46.7 mm carapace length. B. Right prosartema. C. Telson. D. Left mandibular palp, ventral view. E. Left appendix masculina and interna, ventral view. F. Appendix masculina, dorsal view. G. Distal subquadrate process of right half of petasma. H. Petasma, ventral view. I. Thelycum.

median groove and low lateral ridges; covered with short setae and obscured by coxal protuberances of fourth pereopods. Posterior portion (between fifth pereopods) consisting of elongate plate; broad central ridge occupying slightly more than anterior two-thirds of plate; well-defined lateral ridges extending from posterior sternal process to anterior margin of somite; two suboval, setose, boss-like structures present between anterior third of lateral ridges and median ridge; anterior margin of posterior sternal process interrupted by deep median sulcus.

*Petasma*. Simple and very slightly involuted; dorsomedian lobule about two-fifths of total length of petasma; entirely united along midline; ventromedian lobule elongate and subtriangular; inner membranous section folded slightly on itself; heavily sclerotized central ridge running length of lobule terminating distally in thick subquadrate process; distal margin smooth; proximolateral angle of quadrate process beak-like with four or five blunt teeth; ventral face of process concave; dorsal face convex; dorsolateral lobule elongate and subtriangular; apex situated under proximolateral angle of distal ventromedian process; lower inner angle forms small proximal process; ventral surface sparsely covered with long setae; ventral costa (occupying entire ventrolateral lobule) extending along lateral margin of petasma reaching half way into distal ventromedian process; apex free and bi-lobed; dorsal lobe longer than ventral lobe; ventral lobe with one to four minute teeth.

*Appendix masculina*. Dorsally convex, ventrally concave, roughly trapezoid in shape; distal margin with row of short, stout setae; appendix interna subequal in length to appendix masculina, half fitting into concave face of latter; elongate with concave median surface; apex with short stout setae. Basal segment of endopodite of pleopod II as wide as long, its distolateral portion concave, subtriangular and produced into long, blunt spur.

*Colour in life*. Body generally red, carapace with broad white stripe running from below hepatic sulcus to almost posterior margin of carapace on each side; this stripe wider in posterior half of carapace; on abdominal segments brighter red patch running anteroventrally on each pleuron; distinct white longitudinal stripe on dorsal carina of abdominal segments 4-6; telson and uropods pinkish white becoming red along posterior edges; lateral margins of scaphocerite red; rostral crest and pereopods pinkish white; basal segments of pleopods grey to white; pleopodal endopodites greyish white becoming bright red distally; marginal setae of pleura, pleopods and uropods orange while those of scaphocerite and antennules white.

#### *Distribution*

Known only from the type locality.

#### *Ecological notes*

All the specimens were collected from the same general area, namely the Limpopo Bight in southern Mozambique. This is an important fishing ground



where the main species of interest are the spiny lobster, *Palinurus delagoae*, caught in about 280–350 metres, the langoustine, *Nephrops andamanicus*, trawled in 320–380 metres, and the pink or knife prawn, *Haliporoides triarthrus*, found in 300–500 metres.

In this area, the continental slope is relatively gentle down to 500 metres after which it drops very steeply to about 3 000 metres. The substrate consists of muddy sand to sandy mud and the temperature at 300–500 metres depth recorded in April and September 1964 was 11–13°C (Instituto Hidrográfico Lisbon 1965, 1967).

Although *Cryptopenaeus catherinae* has so far been found only in the type locality, it seems feasible to expect that, as its associate species, *Haliporoides triarthrus*, *Aristeomorpha foliacea* and *Penaeopsis balssi* are found off the coast of Natal, the distribution of *C. catherinae* could possibly extend southward as well.

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